

THE DIFFUSION OF PACIFIC ENGLISH-LEXIFIER PIDGINS AND CREOLES: EVIDENCE FROM AUSTRALIAN KRIOL

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Abstract: Australian Kriol is an English-lexifier creole, spoken in the Northern Territory and adjacent areas of Western Australia and Queensland, which has generally not been considered in previous comparative work on English-lexifier pidgins and creoles. In this paper I adopt an approach used in research on the historical-linguistic relationships among English-lexifier contact languages (Baker and Huber 2001), which takes into account specific diagnostic features recorded at any time in their history. The findings have several implications. First attestations in Australian Kriol provide further data relevant to any investigation into issues such as the origin and diffusion of diagnostic features and the genetic relationships holding among the Pacific English-lexifier varieties. Also, the feature-based approach adopted allows for the quantification of the degree of affinity of Australian Kriol with other potentially relevant Pacific English-lexifier pidgins and creoles. Finally, evidence from Australian Kriol – corroborated with that provided by other Pacific English-lexifier contact languages (Avram 2004a) – demonstrates that a number of diagnostic features hitherto believed to occur only in Atlantic varieties (Baker and Huber 2001) have in fact a world-wide distribution.

Keywords: English-lexifier creoles, diagnostic features, classification, Pacific, world-wide

1. Introduction

Kriol is an English-lexifier creole, spoken in the Northern Territory and adjacent areas of Western Australia and Queensland (see e.g. Holm 1989: 541-543, Mühlhäusler 1991). It is a relatively well researched variety. Synchronic descriptions include Sandefur (1979), Hudson (1985), Sandefur (1986), Sandefur and Harris (1986), Malcolm (2008a and 2008b), while diachronic issues are examined e.g. by Harris (1991, 1993).

Australian Kriol has not figured prominently in comparative work on English-lexifier pidgins and creoles (with notable exceptions such as Clark 1979 and Harris 1988). This paper is an attempt at discussing Australian Kriol from a comparative-historical perspective, in light of the attestations in the language of the diagnostic features of English-lexifier pidgins and creoles suggested by Baker and Huber (2001).

The paper is organized as follows. In section 2 I present the corpus and the methodology used in compiling the list of first attestations in Australian Kriol of the diagnostic features proposed by Baker and Huber (2001). The attestations are listed in section 3. Section 4 compares the distribution of diagnostic features in Australian Kriol and in the six Pacific varieties examined by Baker and Huber (2001). Section 5 is concerned with the affinities between Australian Kriol, on the one hand, and Chinese Pidgin English, Eastern Australian Pidgin, Melanesian Pidgin and Torres Strait Creole, on the other. Section 6 discusses a number of selected features found in Australian Kriol. The findings are summarized in section 7.

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2. Data and methodology

The data analyzed are from Northern Territory Pidgin English – the predecessor of today’s Australian Kriol – and from both the so-called “heavy” and “light” varieties of Australian Kriol. The corpus includes: early records of Northern Territory Pidgin English (Willey 1876, Sowden 1882, Daly 1887, Gunn 1905, Searcey 1909, 1912, Masson 1915, White 1917, Gee 1926), descriptions of modern Australian Kriol (Sandefur 1979, Hudson 1985, Sandefur 1986, 1991, Malcolm 2008a and 2008b, Schultze-Berndt and al. 2013), textbooks and phrase-books (Sandefur and Sandefur 1982, Angelo 2008); dictionaries (Sandefur and Sandefur 1979, Lee 2004).

Diagnostic features “represent significant phonological, lexical, or grammatical deviations from, or innovations to, varieties of British English – since British English was the major input in the restructuring process” (Baker and Huber 2001:163). The 302 diagnostic features suggested by Baker and Huber (2001:165) are divided into three groups: Atlantic (173), world-wide (75), and Pacific (54). To qualify for the Atlantic group items must be attested in at least two Atlantic English-lexified Pidgins and Creoles. World-wide features are recorded in at least one Atlantic and one Pacific variety. Pacific features occur in Pacific varieties exclusively (Baker and Huber 2001:165). The statistical feature-based approach adopted takes into account features recorded at any time in the history of Australian Kriol, even though some of these are no longer in use. Reference to Baker and Huber’s (2001) list of diagnostic features also ensures comparability of the data.

Each diagnostic feature is numbered and labeled and/or defined as in Baker and Huber (2001: 197-204). In the case of a number of items found in published works, there are discrepancies between the year of the first attestation and the year of publication of the source. The date of the first attestation of these items corresponds to the year mentioned by the author. The entry for each feature includes the date of the first attestation and the relevant reference. When an exact year cannot be established, the system used by Baker and Huber (2001: 164-165) has been adopted: a year preceded by a hyphen reads ‘in or before’, if preceded and followed by a hyphen ‘in or around’, and if followed by a hyphen ‘in or after’. The year of full attestations, i.e. of well-established features, is unbracketed, while that of a marginal feature is given in square brackets. Attestations are scored as follows: a full attestation is scored 1, whereas a marginal one receives a score of 0.5. Variants are also listed, in the following cases: if they date from the same year; if they are suggestive of different pronunciations; if they illustrate different uses/meanings. Some entries also include later attestations to illustrate the use of particular features. The sources are mentioned between brackets. All examples appear in the orthography or system of transcription used in the sources. The length of quotations has been kept to a reasonable minimum. Relevant items in quotations are in boldface. All quotations are accompanied by their translation.

3. First attestations in Australian Kriol

Listed below are the first attestations in Australian Kriol of the diagnostic features proposed by Baker and Huber (2001):

37. *de, da, na, a* (equative copula)
Yu da pirla parri 1985 (Hudson 1985: 91)
 ‘You’re a devil, boy.’
40. *dem* (article, demonstrative)
Dem boniboni Kaman iya. 1979 (Sandefur 1979: 84)
 ‘Those colts are coming here.’
Dem kids dei bisi pley-in la trempalin. 1985 (Hudson 1985: 39)
 ‘The children are busy playing on the trampoline.’
43. *dem* (PL POSS)
Dei bin laitimapbat blanga dem jumok 1985 (Hudson 1985: 52)
 ‘They were lighting up their cigarettes.’
58. *for* PRON NP (genitive)
 First attestation in 1985 (Hudson 1985: 47)
62. *fullup* ‘fill, be-full’
bulap ‘full’ 1979 (Sandefur and Sandefur 1979: 23)
Mi bulap na. 1982 (Sandefur and Sandefur 1982: 31)
 ‘I’m full now.’
84. *kaka* ‘shit, excrement’
kaka 1979 (Sandefur and Sandefur 1979: 64)
96. *look* ‘see, find’
ai bin luk dadan boniboni 1979 (Sandefur 1979: 78)
 ‘I saw the colt.’
I bin lukum is matha 1985 (Hudson 1985: 142)
 ‘He saw his mother.’
100. *married* ‘marry’
merit 2004 (Lee 2004)
112. NP1 *for* NP2 (possessive N2’s N1)
Det dog fo im bin go longwei 1985 (Hudson 1985: 73)
 ‘His dog went a long way.’
147. *sweet* ‘tasty; please (v.)’
Dis taka i swit 1985 (Hudson 1985: 81)
 ‘This food is tasty.’
swit ‘sweet; tasty’¹ 2004 (Lee 2004)
165. *we* (1PL OBL)
I bin git leit bla wi. 1985 (Hudson 1985: 105)
 ‘It got late for us’
Sowunso gada shuda bif ba wi iya. 1998 (Angelo 2008: 160)
 ‘My son-in-law is going to shoot some meat for us here.’
167. WH *matter* ‘why’
What’s the matter all day come home? 1902 (Gunn 1905: 66)
 ‘Why should I come back home every day?’
wajameda 1979 (Sandefur and Sandefur 1979: 127)
174. *all about* ‘everywhere’
blackfella sit down all about 1882- (Searcey 1912: 173)
 ‘there are Aborigines everywhere’
olabat / alabat 2004 (Lee 2004)

¹ Lee (2004) adds the following comment; “as meat with fat on it”.

175. *all same* ‘like’
 First attestation in 1847 (Tryon and Charpentier 2004: 163)
all the same you 1883 (Searcey 1909: 95)
 ‘like you’
all same Chinaman -1886 (Searcey 1912: 165)
 ‘like the Chinese’
wulijeim / wulijim 2004 (Lee 2004)
178. *been* (past/anterior)
we been go longa jungle 1882 (Searcey 1912: 87)
 ‘we went into the jungle’
180. *born* ‘give birth’
bornim 1979 (Sandefur and Sandefur 1979: 20)
181. *bruck* ‘break’
brugim 1979 (Sandefur and Sandefur 1979: 22)
brokam / brokum 2004 (Lee 2004)
182. *byandby* (adv.) ‘soon’
bambai 2004 (Lee 2004)
183. *capsize* ‘spill, pour (out)’
Kapjaid-im 2013 (Schultze-Berndt and al. 2013: 250)
 ‘Turn it over.’
184. *catch* ‘get, obtain, reach’
Macassar man have to catchem wood 1882 (Searcey 1912: 172)
 ‘the Macassans have to gather wood’
gejimap ‘reach, go high, get, bring up to, arrive at’ 1979 (Sandefur and Sandefur 1979: 43)
gajim 2004 (Lee 2002)
gejimap / kijimap ‘arrive in time’ 2004 (Lee 2004)
186. *da(t)* (definite article)
Det motika i bagarrap. 1985 (Hudson 1985: 38)
 ‘The car won’t go.’
188. *dem* (3PL)
dem 2004 (Lee 2004)
189. *falldown* ‘fall’ (reanalysis)
him fall down 1914 (Masson 1915: 167)
 ‘he fell’
boldan 1979 (Sandefur and Sandefur 1979: 19)
boldaun 1982 (Sandefur and Sandefur 1982: 40)
poldan 1985 (Hudson 1985: 37)
Det kid bin foldan 1985 (Hudson 1985: 54)
 ‘The hid fell.’
191. VERB *finish* (completive)
I bin drap pinij. 1985 (Hudson 1985: 33)
 ‘He collapsed. [and didn’t get up again for a long time]’
binij 1986 (Sandefur 1986: 24)
192. *for* (infinitive)
ole boi bin oldei kam get-im joup fo wosh-im kloth 2013 (Schultze-Berndt and al. 2013: 250)
 ‘The (stock) boys used to come and get soap to wash their clothes’
194. *got* ‘have’
me bin gotem [...] -1886 (Searcey 1912: 237)
 ‘I had [...]’
gadi / gadim 1979 (Sandefur and Sandefur 1979: 41)
196. *he* (resumptive)
 First attestation in 1908 (Tryon and Charpentier 2004: 159)
blanga im dedi, i bin telim 1985 (Hudson 1985: 71)
 ‘his father told him’

199. *him* (3SG POSS)
Im langa im kemp. 1979 (Sandefur 1979: 148)
'He is at his camp.'
200. *him* (3SG)
him *turn* 1882 (Searcey 1912: 35)
'he turns'
203. *little bit* 'slightly'
First attestation in 1943 (Tryon and Charpentier 2004: 160)
Olabat libit go dakbala. 1979 (Sandefur 1979: 135)
'They turn slightly dark.'
204. *long* 'with'
make me whitefellow longa paint 1902 (Gunn 1905: 20)
Det men bin agumen langa det wumun. (Hudson 1985: 60)
'The man disputed with the woman.'
nanga 2004 (Lee 2004)
208. *me* (1SG)
me *like you* 1876 (Wildey 1876: 119)
'I like you'
209. *me* (1SG POSS)
mi *gabarra* 1979 (Sandefur 1979: 90)
'my head'
210. *moon* 'month'
First attestation in 1913 (Tryon and Charpentier 2004: 162)
mun 1979 (Sandefur and Sandefur 1979: 86)
211. *more better* 'better'
you more better shoot alonga tail 1882 (Searcey 1912: 55)
'you had better shoot [it] in the tail'
mobeda 1979 (Sandefur and Sandefur 1979: 85)
najawan song yu singim mobeda 2004 (Lee 2004)
'the other song you sing is better'
213. NP1NP2 (possessive N1's N2)
Me put him longa Nellie bed 1902 (Gunn 1905: 56)
'I put it in Nellie's bed'
Mi dadi braja kemp 1979 (Sandefur 1979: 108)
'my father's brother's camp'
214. *never* (negative-completive)
Mipala neba gedam shuga. 1985 (Hudson 1985: 28)
'We didn't get any shugar.'
215. *no* (negator)
You no bread 1846 (Harris 1988: 92)
'You [have] no bread'
216. *nogood* 'bad'
you no good 1846 (Harris 1988: 92)
'you're bad'
217. *number one* 'best, chief (adj.)'
First attestation in -1939 (Tryon and Charpentier 2004: 162)
nambawan 1979 'first, most important, principal, very good' (Sandefur and Sandefur 1979: 88)
218. *one* (indefinite article)
wan 2004 (Lee 2004)
219. *one time* '(at) once'
Wantaim mibala bin go tharrei la bush 1982 (Sandefur and Sandefur 1982: 67)
'We once went out into the bush'
220. paragogic vowels
too muchee 1882 (Sowden 1882: 110)

221. *piccaninny* ‘small; child’
piccaninny 1843 (Harris 1988: 88)
you take piccaninny gun 1882 (Searcey 1912: 80)
 ‘take the small gun’
Yu nomo meigim mijelb biginini 1982 (Sandefur and Sandefur 1982: 20)
 ‘Don’t behave like a child.’
pikanini ‘child, baby; sister’s children’ 1986 (Sandefur 1986: 189)
222. *plenty* NOUN ‘a lot’
plenty 1844 (Harris 1988: 88)
I garra plendi timana 1985 (Hudson 1985: 168)
 ‘A lot of buffaloes are there.’
224. *plenty* ‘very; many’
 First attestation in 1843 (Tryon and Charpentier 2004: 163)
225. *sabby* ‘know’
No savee 1882 (Sowden 1882: 110)
 ‘I don’t know’
sabi / jabi 1982 (Sandefur and Sandefur 1982: 37)
226. *-side* (locative suffix)
wansaid ‘by’ 1982 (Sandefur and Sandefur 1982: 31)
227. *sitdown* ‘sit, reside’ (reanalysis)
 First attestation in 1847 (Tryon and Charpentier 2004: 164)
big fellow alligator sit down 1882 (Searcey 1912: 55)
 ‘there is a big alligator’
sidan / jidan 1982 (Sandefur and Sandefur 1982: 37)
Wi bin jidan la sheid 1985 (Hudson 1985: 63)
 ‘We sat in the shade.’
Mai mami bin jidan la Debi 1985 (Hudson 1985: 107)
 ‘My mother was living in Derby.’
229. *standup* ‘stand’
Tumaj meinggo tri jandap deya. 1979 (Sandefur 1979: 185)
 ‘There are many mango trees there.’
jendap 1999 (Angelo 2008: 155)
230. *stop* (locative verb)
 First attestation in 1913 (Tryon and Charpentier 2004: 165)
I garra stap Debi fo longtaim 1985 (Hudson 1985: 102)
 ‘He will be in Derby for a long time.’
231. *suppose* ‘if’
suppose that one young strong pfeller alligator 1883- (Searcey 1909: 270)
 ‘if that had been a young, strong alligator’
233. *thatsall* ‘just, only, still’
teigimbak sikwan tasol naitaim 1985 (Graber 1988: 29)
 ‘took back just the sick at night’
235. *too much* ADJ/VERB ‘a lot’
 First attestation in 1848 (Tryon and Charpentier 2004: 165)
you too muchee gammon 1882 (Searcey 1909: 37)
 ‘you lie a lot’
too much strong, quick pfeller 1883- (Searcey 1909: 270)
 ‘very strong [and] quick’
238. *too much* NOUN ‘many, a lot of’
too muchee money 1882 (Sowden 1882: 37)
 ‘a lot of money’
Tumaj miskida la Roper. 1979 (Sandefur 1979: 184)
 ‘There are swarms of mosquitoes at Roper.’
I garra tumatj ai ngapa iya 2004 (Lee 2004)
 ‘There’s a lot of water on the track’

239. *walkabout* ‘wander’
 First attestation in 1877 (Tryon and Charpentier 2004: 166)
me want walk-about 1902 (Gunn 1905: 106)
 ‘I want to wander’
wokabat 1979 (Sandefur and Sandefur 1979: 132)
Lili bin go wokabat lugaran gowena. 2004 (Lee 2004)
 ‘Lili went to search for a goanna.’
240. *we* (relativizer)
Ai bin luk jadan men weya imin kilim bogiban. 1979 (Sandefur 1979: 165)
 ‘I saw the man who killed the echidna.’
we ‘who, which, that (relative pronoun)’ 2004 (Lee 2004)
241. *WH for* ‘why’
 First attestation in 1843 (Tryon and Charpentier 2004: 167)
what for you get em lost 1882 (Searcey 1912: 70)
 ‘why did you lose it’
whafor [...] say 1883 (Searcey 1912: 123)
 ‘why [...] say’
wotfo 1984 (Sandefur 1984: 106)
wadbo 2004 (Lee 2004)
246. *WH time* ‘when’
wadaim 1979 (Sandefur and Sandefur 1979: 126)
wotaim 1984 (Sandefur 1984: 106)
wataim 1986 (Sandefur 1986: 190)
Wotaim yumob bin kambek? 1999 (Angelo 2008)
wattaim 2004 (Lee 2004)
247. ZERO (equative copula)
Him Maluka. 1902 (Gunn 1905: 78)
 ‘That’s Maluka.’
248. ZERO (predicative copula)
you no good 1846 (Harris 1988: 92)
 ‘you’re bad’
249. *all* (PL marker)
 First attestation in 1900 (Tryon and Charpentier 2004: 163)
Orla kid bin tjakam ston 1985 (Hudson 1985: 26)
 ‘The children threw stones.’
ola kenggurru 1999 (Angelo 2008: 151)
 ‘(the) kangaroos’
252. *another fellow* NOUN ‘another NOUN’
another fella blackfella 1882- (Searcey 1912: 73)
255. *belong* (genitive)
 First attestation in 1847 (Tryon and Charpentier 2004: 157)
eye belonga me 1902 (Gunn 1905: 11)
 ‘my eye’
blanga / bla / ba 1982 (Sandefur and Sandefur 1982: 11)
Ai bin faindim det kap bla det wumun 1985 (Hudson 1985: 71)
 ‘I found the woman’s cup.’
bo 2004 (Lee 2004)
256. *blackfellow* ‘indigene’
 First attestation in 1847 (Tryon and Charpentier 2004: 157)
takem one piecee blackfella along bush 1883 (Searcey 1912: 127)
 ‘will take one Aborigine into the bush’
blekbala 1986 (Sandefur 1986: 184)
Wan blekpala go langa gardiya. 2004 (Lee 2004)
 ‘An Aboriginal [girl] went with a white man.’

257. *bullock* ‘cattle, beef’
I bin find bullocky 1902 (Harris 1988: 92)
 ‘I found the cattle’
buligi 1982 (Sandefur and Sandefur 1982: 51)
det big bul bin lidimbat detlat buluk 1985 (Hudson 1985: 171)
 ‘that big bull was leading the others’
258. *byandby* (future)
By-em-by *catchem crab* 1882 (Searcey 1912: 75)
 ‘They will catch the crab’
bambai 1984 (Sandefur 1984: 84)
baimbai 1986 (Sandefur 1986: 183)
259. *calico* ‘cloth(es)’
kaliko 1979 (Sandefur and Sandefur 1979: 64)
i garra keliko antap-wei 1985 (Hudson 1985: 168)
 ‘it has a canvas top’
262. *close up* ‘near (by)’
Im gulijap la riba. 1979 (Sandefur 1979: 170)
 ‘He is near the river.’
Det lat hausis standup kulujap. 2004 (Lee 2004)
 ‘Those houses are close together.’
263. *cranky* ‘crazy’
 First attestation in -1943 (Tryon and Charpentier 2004: 160)
kraingki ‘angry, upset; mad, insane’ 1979 (Sandefur and Sandefur 1979: 69)
kreinggibala ‘foolish’ 1984 (Sandefur 1984: 93)
kreingki ‘foolish’ 2004 (Lee 2004)
264. *devil devil* ‘evil spirit’
 First attestation in 1845 (Tryon and Charpentier 2004: 157)
debbil debbil 1882 (Sowden 1882: 11)
dibuldibul ‘evil spirit, devil, Satan’ 1979 (Sandefur and Sandefur 1979: 28)
Blanda dedudebul tharran. 1985 (Graber 1988: 31)
 ‘It’s demonic, it is.’
debuldebul / debul debul ‘devil, evil spirit’ 2004 (Lee 2004)
265. ADJ *fellow* NOUN ‘ADJ NOUN’
good fellow *water* 1882 (Searcey 1912: 76)
 ‘good water’
Im shabala wadi. 1979 (Sandefur 1979: 102)
 ‘It’s a sharp stick.’
I garram hardpala kin 1985 (Hudson 185: 86) ‘It has a tough hide.’
266. No. *fellow* NOUN ‘NUMERAL NOUN’
one fellow *white man* 1883 (Searcey 1912: 127)
Ai bin dagat fobala jaojao. 1979 (Sandefur 1979: 80)
 ‘I ate four water lily stalks.’
267. VERB ADJ *fellow* (adverb)
Macassar man go away quick fella 1882- (Searcey 1912: 167)
 ‘the Macassans went away quickly’
Yu jis jidan kwaitbala. 1982 (Sandefur and Sandefur 1982:51)
 ‘Sit quietly.’
268. *first time* ‘ahead; formerly’
 First attestation in -1888- (Tryon and Charpentier 2004: 157)
What name he bin do first time? 1928 (Harris 1988: 89)
 ‘what did he do before?’
basdaim / basdam ‘previously’ 1982 (Sandefur and Sandefur 1982: 14)
I bin tokin Walmajarri festaim. 2004 (Lee 2004)
staim (Lee 2004)

269. *flash* 'smart'
First attestation in 1923 (Tryon and Charpentier 2004: 158)
flesh 1996 (Sandefur and Harris 1986: 183)
blajbala / blas 2004 (Lee 2004)
Yu blas bla yu biginini. 2004 (Lee 2004)
'You're proud of your children.'
270. *gammon* 'lie' (n., v.)
you too muchee gammon 1882 (Searcey 1909: 37)
'you lie a lot'
geman / giyeman 'pretend, fake; play; lie' 2004 (Lee 2004)
Ai bin gemangeman mikenik 2004 (Lee 2004)
'I pretended to be a mechanic'
272. *kaikai* 'eat; food'
- kaikai* [1974] (Sharpe 1974: 3)
274. *kill* 'hit, strike'
- killem alonga head* 1882 (Searcey 1912: 55)
'hit [it] in the head'
gilim 1979 (Sandefur and Sandefur 1979: 45)
kilim 1984 (Sandefur 1984: 93)
kili / kilam 'hit; injure, hurt, cause bodily harm' 2004 (Lee 2004)
275. *look out* 'take care of'
God all day look out longa you 1902 (Gunn 1905: 86)
'God takes care of you every day'
lukat 2004 (Lee 2004)
276. *look out* 'search for, hunt'
First attestation in -1939 (Tryon and Charpentier 2004: 160)
281. *me fellow* (1PL, 1PL OBL)
First attestation in -1939 (Tryon and Charpentier 2004: 162)
mibala bin luk boniboni 1979 (Sandefur 1979: 86)
'we saw a colt'
mipala bin go langa Debi 1985 (Hudson 1985: 171)
'we went to Derby'
dei bin weitin bla mipala 1985 (Hudson 1985: 173)
'They were waiting for us'
282. *might* 'perhaps'
First attestation in -1906- (Tryon and Charpentier 2004: 161)
mait 1979 (Sandefur and Sandefur 1979: 79)
maiti L...garra duwim seim langa mi egen 1985 (Hudson 1985: 121)
'Maybe L... will do the same thing to me again.'
Maidi yu bin luk im 1999 (Angelo 2008: 164)
'Maybe you saw him'
mait / maiti 2004 (Lee 2004)
283. *my word* (exclamation of surprise)
My word 'good gracious' 1882 (Sowden 1882: 144)
284. *new chum* 'newcomer'
new chum 1910 (Gee, Lionel C. E. 1926: 15)
286. *plenty* (preverbal)
good fellow water, plenty walk 1882 (Searcey 1912: 76)
'good water, [it] flows a lot'
287. *saltwater* 'sea; coastal'
First attestation in 1845 (Tryon and Charpentier 2004: 165)
solwoda 1984 (Sandefur 1984: 102)
solwada 2004 (Lee 2004)

288. *sing out* ‘shout’
no more sing out 1882- (Searcey 1912: 176)
‘don’t shout any more’
mibala bin jingat 1982 (Sandefur and Sandefur 1982: 63)
‘we called out [to them]’
I bin singat langa is sista 1985 (Hudson 1985: 61)
‘He called out to his sister.’
290. *sugar bag* ‘honeycomb’
sugar bag 1902 (Gunn 1905: 3)
sugabeg ‘wild honey’ 1979 (Sandefur 1979: 81)
jugubeig 1982 (Sandefur and Sandefur 1982: 23)
Yunmi labda bilimap jugubeg. 1982 (Sandefur and Sandefur 1982: 33)
‘We’ll have to fill up a [container with] honey.’
shugabeg 1982 (Sandefur and Sandefur 1982: 32)
shugabeig 1984 (Sandefur 1984: 101)
sugabeig / sugubeg 2004 (Lee 2004)
291. *that fellow* NOUN ‘that NOUN’
That fella snake 1882 (Searcey 1912: 172)
‘That snake’
293. *tomahawk* ‘hatchet, small axe’
tomiok 1979 (Sandefur and Sandefur 1979: 123)
Imin² kadim nomo gadim domiyok. 1979 (Sandefur 1979: 158)
‘He cut [it] without an axe.’
domiauk 1982 (Sandefur and Sandefur 1982: 12)
tomiyauk 1984 (Sandefur 1984: 104)
tamiyek 2004 (Lee 2004)
295. VERB-VM (transitive suffix)
First attestation in 1843 (Tryon and Charpentier 2004: 161)
alligator alonga creek killem horse 1878 (Searcey 1912: 73)
‘an alligator from the creek killed a horse’
suppose alligator catch him old woman 1907 (White 1917: 33)
‘if the alligator catches an old woman’
Stakmen bin barnim gras. 1979 (Sandefur 1979: 114)
The stockmen burnt the grass.
296. WH *name* ‘who?, what?’ (interrogative pron.)
what name, Missus? 1902 (Gunn 1905: 47)
‘what, Missis’
wanem / wanim 1979 (Sandefur and Sandefur 1979: 128)
298. WH *name* ‘why?’
First attestation in 1919 (Tryon and Charpentier 2004: 166)
299. *whitefellow* ‘European’
First attestation in 1847 (Tryon and Charpentier 2004: 166)
Whitefellow! 1886 (Mrs Daly 1887: 334)
‘Europeans!’
Dat blanga waitbala. 1982 (Sandefur and Sandefur 1982: 4)
‘They belong to that whiteman.’
Mipala kan lijn prapli langa waitpala 1985 (Hudson 1985: 176)
‘we don’t understand the whites’
300. *yet* ‘still’
yet 1979 (Sandefur and Sandefur 1979: 135)
kip widabat bla mibala yet 1982 (Sandefur and Sandefur 1982: 63)
‘[they were] still waiting for us’

² A contraction of *im bin*.

301. *you and me* (1PL, 1PL OBL)
you and me 1902 (Harris 1988: 89)
You'n me *go killem that one cheeky fella* 1914 (Masson 1915: 175)
 'We two will hit that cheeky fellow'
302. *you fellow* (2PL)
 First attestation in -1946 (Tryon and Charpentier 2004: 167)
yubala *kaman iya* 1979 (Sandefur 1979: 85)
 'you all come here'
yufela *ol no* 1985 (Graber 1988: 30)
Wen yupala bin go lilbit longwei [...] 1985 (Hudson 1985: 160)
 'When you were walking around a fair way off [...]'
yupela 2004 (Lee 2004)

The number of diagnostic features recorded in Australian Kriol consists of 97 well-established features and of one marginally attested, i.e. 97.5

As for the year of the first attestation, note that, although "PPEs [= Pacific Pidgin Englishes] are generally well documented from the beginning" (Baker and Huber 2001: 167), only 39 (i.e. 40%) of the diagnostic features found in Australian Kriol have pre-1900 first attestations³.

4. Australian Kriol and other Pacific English-lexifier pidgins and creoles

With 97.5 features, Australian Kriol ranks lower than Melanesian Pidgin English, but higher than Eastern Australian Pidgin, Hawaii Pidgin Creole, Chinese Pidgin English, and the varieties of Pitcairn and Norfolk and of Kiribati (see Baker and Huber (2001: 171, Figure 5).

Baker and Huber (2001: 171) write that "a fundamental difference between the Atlantic and Pacific varieties" is that "the absolute number of features in the latter is generally lower, with the average in the Atlantic being more than twice as high than that in the Pacific". As shown in Table 1, the absolute number of diagnostic features recorded in Kriol is above the average for the Pacific varieties⁴ considered by Baker and Huber (2001), but still well below the average in the Atlantic:

Average in Atlantic varieties	145.4
Average in Pacific varieties	63.3
KRL	97.5

Table 1. Absolute number of diagnostic features

Table 2 compares the distribution of world-wide features in the six varieties considered by Baker and Huber (2001: 171) and in Australian Kriol:

³ According to Baker and Huber (2001: 159), the discovery of such attestations "minimizes the effect of later, non-diffusionist cross-influences" between the varieties considered (e.g. through the media, modern communication or increased mobility in the 20th century)".

⁴ Abbreviations used in the tables: CPE = Chinese Pidgin English; EAP = Eastern Australian Pidgin; HPC = Hawaii Pidgin Creole; KBT = Kiribati; KRL = Australian Kriol; MPE = Melanesian Pidgin English; PIN = Pitcairn-Norfolk; TSC = Torres Strait Creole.

Variety	Number of features
CPE	48.0
MPE	51.5
EAP	42.0
KBT	27.0
HPC	49.5
PIN	20.0
Average	39.6
KRL	49.0

Table 2. World-wide features in 7 Pacific varieties

With 49.0 world-wide features, Australian Kriol would fall within the range of Pacific varieties (from 20.0 to 51.5), above the average. The proportion of world-wide features in the same varieties is set out below:

Variety	Number of features
CPE	85.7
MPE	50.2
EAP	46.7
KBT	80.6
HPC	78.6
PIN	58.0
Average	66.6
KRL	50.2

Table 3. Percentage of world-wide features in 7 Pacific varieties

Australian Kriol would again fall within the Pacific varieties range (from 46.7% to 85.7%), below the average.

In terms of the distribution of diagnostic features Australian Kriol generally exhibits characteristics typical of the Pacific pidgins and creoles. Note, however, that Baker and Huber (2001: 173) attribute the low percentage of world-wide features in Eastern Australian Pidgin and Melanesian Pidgin English to the fact that “these are spoken in the only locations linked by extensive population movements”. If so, the similarly low percentage of world-wide features in Australian Kriol remains unaccounted for, given that it emerged under circumstances which did not involve significant population movements (Sandefur 1986: 20-21, Holm 1989: 541-542, Harris 1991, 1993, Munro 2000, Simpson 2000).

5. Affinities of Australian Kriol with Chinese Pidgin English, Melanesian Pidgin English, Eastern Australian Pidgin, and Torres Strait Creole

While the relatedness of Eastern Australian Pidgin and Chinese Pidgin English to Australian Kriol is generally accepted in the literature, whether two other Pacific

varieties, Melanesian Pidgin English and Torres Strait Creole influenced its formation is a matter of some dispute. Authors such as Sharpe (1974), Clark (1979 and 1983) argue that Melanesian Pidgin English is related to Australian Kriol. Clark (1979: 40), for example, writes that after Early Melanesian Pidgin English had spread to Queensland, “pidgin from the Queensland plantations was also carried by stockmen into Northern Territory, where it merged with the existing Aboriginal pidgin to form the basis of the modern Roper River Creole”. This claim is firmly rejected by Harris (1988, 1991 and 1993), on the strength of both historical and linguistic evidence. An analysis of the lexicon of Northern Territory Pidgin English leads Harris (1988: 96-97) to the conclusion that “there is no substantial evidence that there ever was a connection between EMPE [= Early Melanesian Pidgin English] of the coastal Queensland sugar plantations and the developing NTPE [= Northern Territory Pidgin English]. As for the relatedness of Torres Strait Creole to Australian Kriol, Sandefur (1986: 20), for instance, states that the two varieties “may have some of their historical roots in the pidgin of the 19th century Queensland”. Nonetheless, Sandefur (1986: 22) concludes that “the historical relationship of Kriol and Torres Strait Creole [...] is very tenuous”. It is beyond the scope of the present paper to evaluate the historical evidence regarding the likelihood of genetic links between Australian Kriol, on the hand, and Melanesian Pidgin English and Torres Strait Creole, on the other. Thus, the discussion that follows is limited to an assessment of the relevance of the features recorded in Australian Kriol, listed in section 3. These features are *a fortiori* relevant given that, as shown in section 2, they are part of a much larger set than in previous comparative work. For instance, both Clark (1979) and Harris (1988) base their arguments in favour and respectively against the existence of a relationship between Australian Kriol and Melanesian Pidgin English on the analysis of an inventory of only 30 features⁵. Similarly, the brief comparison of Australian Kriol with Torres Strait Creole in Sandefur (1986: 22-24) is restricted to a small number of lexical and syntactic features.

Consider first the number of diagnostic features which Australian shares with Chinese Pidgin English, Melanesian Pidgin English, Eastern Australian Pidgin, and Torres Strait Creole:

KRL with CPE	35
KRL with MPE	91
KRL with EAP	69
KRL with TSC	78

Table 4. Number of diagnostic features shared by KRL with CPE, EAP, MPE and TSC

At first sight, Melanesian Pidgin English would appear to be the closest relative of Australian Kriol, with which it shares the largest number of features, followed by Torres Strait Creole and Eastern Australian Pidgin, with Chinese Pidgin English coming out last.

The suggestion of a potential input from Melanesian Pidgin English and Torres Strait Creole is confirmed by substantial evidence. 18 of the diagnostic features proposed by Baker and Huber (2001) which are attested in Australian Kriol are also recorded in

⁵ For Torres Strait Creole the data are from Avram (2004b) and from my own corpus. For data from Australian Kriol see also Avram (2005).

Melanesian Pidgin English and/or Torres Strait Creole, but are not attested in Eastern Australian Pidgin (see section 6). This is stark contrast to the picture that emerges from a comparison of Australian Kriol and Eastern Australian Pidgin on the basis of the same set of diagnostic features: none of these is shared exclusively by Australian Kriol and Eastern Australian Pidgin. This is a rather surprising finding, on the assumption that Eastern Australian Pidgin is “the major lexical source language” of Northern Territory Pidgin English (Harris 1988: 96), and hence of Australian Kriol.

However, as shown by Baker and Huber (2001), the number of shared features is not a reliable indicator of relatedness, given the discrepancies in the quantity and quality of data available for each variety. To overcome this problem, affinity is determined with the following statistical method. First, the number of diagnostic features a pair of varieties would share if the distribution of these were random is calculated. The formula can be stated as follows: $N_i \times N_j / N_t$ (where N_i = number of features attested in variety_i; N_j = number of features attested in variety_j; N_t = total number of features considered). Second, the result obtained is deducted from the actual number of diagnostic features shared. This shows whether the number of the shared features is more or less than predicted by a random distribution. A high positive value for the difference between the actual and the predicted number of shared features indicates relatedness.

Consider first the calculation of the affinities in terms of all features. The base (= N_t) taken into account should consist of the 75 world-wide features and the 54 Pacific features in Baker and Huber (2001: 201-204), i.e. amounting to 129. For reasons explained in section 6, however, the base includes 12 other diagnostic features. The results are presented below:

	Actual	Predicted	Difference
KRL with CPE	35.0	38.7	-3.7
KRL with MPE	91.0	78.4	12.6
KRL with EAP	69.0	62.2	6.8
KRL with TSC	78.0	67.0	11.0

Table 5. Affinities of KRL with CPE, EAP, MPE and TSC: All features

The negative value for the affinity of Australian Kriol with Chinese Pidgin English shows that the latter is not major actor in the emergence of the former. The highest score, Australian Kriol with Melanesian Pidgin English, substantiates the historical relationship between these varieties, in confirmation of Clark (1979), but *contra* Harris (1988, 1991 and 1993). The second highest score, Australian Kriol with Torres Strait Creole, is in accord with the observation that there is a certain degree of mutual intelligibility between the two varieties (Sandefur 1986: 25).

Consider next the calculations carried out on the two relevant subsets of diagnostic features: the world-wide features and the Pacific features. The scores are set out in Table 6 and Table 7 respectively:

	Actual	Predicted	Difference
KRL with CPE	32.0	31.3	0.7
KRL with MPE	44.0	33.6	10.4
KRL with EAP	33.0	27.4	5.6
KRL with TSC	41.0	32.6	8.4

Table 6. Affinities of KRL with CPE, EAP, MPE and TSC: World-wide features

	Actual	Predicted	Difference
KRL with CPE	3.0	5.4	-5.4
KRL with MPE	37.0	34.9	2.1
KRL with EAP	36.0	32.8	3.2
KRL with TSC	27.0	21.9	5.1

Table 7. Affinities of KRL with CPE, EAP, MPE and TSC: Pacific features

Chinese Pidgin English is again shown to be less relevant to the emergence of Australian Kriol; particularly relevant in this respect is the negative score in the subset of Pacific features. As for the remaining three varieties, these all exhibit positive scores, both in the world-wide features subset and in the Pacific one. The fact that positive scores are also based on shared Pacific features indicates that Australian Kriol did not emerge and develop independently of Eastern Australian Pidgin, Melanesian Pidgin English, and Torres Strait Creole.

Summing up, while the results confirm the undeniable contribution of Eastern Australian, they also show that Torres Strait Creole and Melanesian Pidgin English influenced the formation of Australian Kriol.

6. Discussion of selected features

The occurrence in Australian Kriol of feature 37. *de, da, na, a* (equative copula) is the only case, on currently available evidence, illustrative of the grammaticalization path DEMONSTRATIVE > COPULA (see Heine and Kuteva 2002: 108-109) attested in a Pacific variety.

Harris (1988: 86) writes that “*all* [...] Plural marker preceding noun [is] not recorded in NT [= Northern Territory]”. As shown in section 3, feature 249. *all* (PL marker) is attested in modern day Australian Kriol.

With respect to feature 196. *he* (resumptive) Harris (1988: 87) states that it is “not found in NT pidgin”, whereas actually it is recorded, as seen in section 3. However, it should be mentioned that, while in other Pacific varieties this resumptive pronoun developed into a predicate marker, in modern Australian Kriol its occurrence is restricted to topicalization contexts, whereby the subject is formally indicated by a pronominalized copy which agrees in number with the subject.

For feature 230. *stop* (locative verb), Harris (1988: 88) specifies that it is “not found in NT pidgins in which equivalent is *sit down*”. The item has been shown in section 3 to occur in modern Australian Kriol.

According to Harris (1988: 90), “no examples have been found in NTPE [= Northern Territory Pidgin English] nor in modern Kriol” of a relative clause marker etymologically derived from English *where*. In fact, feature 240. *we* (relativizer) is attested in modern Australian Kriol, as seen in section 3. Note also that an example illustrative of the use of this relativizer is provided by Harris (1988: 97, n. 7).

Harris (1988: 93) maintains that feature 272. *kaikai* ‘eat; food’ is not part of modern Kriol”. However, *kaikai* meaning ‘food’ is recorded in some varieties of modern Australian Kriol. It also figures in Sandefur and Sandefur’s (1979) dictionary, with the specification “rarely used in Kriol”.

The following are the 14 diagnostic features shared by Australian Kriol, Melanesian Pidgin English and Torres Strait Creole, but not by Eastern Australian Pidgin English: 40. *dem* (article, demonstrative); 62. *fullup* ‘fill, be-full’; 96. *look* ‘see, find’; 100. *married* ‘marry’; 167. WH *matter* ‘why’; 189. *falldown* ‘fall’ (reanalysis); 192. *for* (infinitive); 200. *him* (3SG); 217. *number one* ‘best, chief (adj.)’; 219. *one time* ‘(at) once’; 229. *standup* ‘stand’ (reanalysis); 233. *thatsall* ‘just, only, still’; 240. *we* (relativizer); 246. WH *time* ‘when’. Note that five of these features are not recorded in any of the other Pacific varieties considered in Baker and Huber (2001): 96. *look* ‘see, find’; 167. WH *matter* ‘why’; 229. *standup* ‘stand’ (reanalysis); 233. *thatsall* ‘just, only, still’; 240. *we* (relativizer).

Four features are shared by Australian Kriol and Torres Strait Creole, but not by Eastern Australian Pidgin: 84. *kaka* ‘shit, excrement’; 180. *born* ‘give birth’; 199. *him* (3SG POSS); 213. NP1 NP2 (possessive N1’s N2). Of these, three features occur only in Australian Kriol and Torres Strait Creole, to the exclusion of any other Pacific variety in Baker and Huber (2001): 84. *kaka* ‘shit, excrement’, 180. *born* ‘give birth’, and 213. NP1 NP2 (possessive N1’s N2).

Consider finally the relevance of the attestations from Australian Kriol to the classification of the diagnostic features of English-lexifier pidgins and creoles. 12 diagnostic features classified as Atlantic ones by Baker and Huber (2001) are found in Australian Kriol: 37. *de, da, na, a* (equative copula); 40. *dem* (article, demonstrative); 43. *dem* (PL POSS); 59. *for* PRON NP (genitive); 62. *fullup* ‘fill, be-full’; 84. *kaka* ‘shit, excrement’; 96. *look* ‘see, find’; 100. *married* ‘marry’; 112. NP1 *for* NP2 (possessive N2’s N1); 147. *sweet* ‘tasty; please (v.)’; 165. *we* (1PL OBL); 167. WH *matter* ‘why’. Since they are found in the Pacific as well, these diagnostic features qualify for the status of world-wide features. For 8 diagnostic of these features there is corroborating evidence from other Pacific varieties which demonstrates that they should be reclassified as world-wide features. The features⁶ at issue are: 40. *dem* (article, demonstrative); 62. *fullup* ‘fill, be-full’; 96. *look* ‘see’; 84. *kaka* ‘shit, excrement’ 100. *married* ‘marry’; 147. *sweet* ‘tasty, please (v.)’; 165. *we* (1PL OBL); 167. WH *matter* ‘why’. Their attestation in Australian Kriol provides further evidence that these are indeed world-wide features. As for the remaining 4 features, 37. *de, da, na, a* (equative copula); 43. *dem* (PL POSS); 58. *for* PRON NP (genitive); 112. NP1 *for* NP2 (possessive N2’s N1), Kriol is the only Pacific

⁶ See especially Avram (2004a); note that feature 84. *kaka* ‘shit, excrement’ was inadvertently not included among the diagnostic features found in Torres Strait Creole. For feature 165. *we* (1PL OBL) see Baker and Mühlhäusler (1996: 538).

variety⁷ providing evidence for their world-wide distribution in English-lexifier pidgins and creoles.

7. Conclusions

The statistical feature-based approach adopted has provided a quantitative measure of the affinities between Australian Kriol, on the one hand, and Chinese Pidgin English, Eastern Australian Pidgin, Melanesian Pidgin English and Torres Strait Creole, on the other hand.

The results indicate that Chinese Pidgin English cannot have played an important part in the emergence of Australian Kriol. This finding accords with the views expressed by e.g. Baker (1987), Harris (1988, 1991), and Baker and Huber (2001: 174) with respect to the role of Chinese Pidgin English in the emergence of the Pacific English-lexifier pidgins and creoles. According to Harris (1988: 96), for instance, “the influence of ChPE [= Chinese Pidgin English] was not great” on Australian Kriol. In a wider perspective, Baker and Huber (2001: 174) also state that “CPE cannot have been the starting point of PPEs [= Pacific Pidgin Englishes]”

The relatedness between Australian Kriol and Eastern Australian Pidgin is confirmed. Two other varieties, Melanesian Pidgin English and Torres Strait Creole appear to have played a part in the formation of Australian Kriol. With respect to Melanesian Pidgin English, this is in confirmation of e.g. Clark (1979), but contra Sandefur (1986), Harris (1988, 1991, 1993). As for Torres Strait Creole, this conclusion is in accord with Sandefur’s (1986: 25) remarks about the existence of a degree of mutual intelligibility with Australian Kriol.

The findings also throw light on the distribution of diagnostic features in the Pacific English-lexifier pidgins and creoles, and more generally across English-lexifier pidgins and creoles. Attestations in Australian Kriol have been shown to be relevant to an adequate classification of several diagnostic features of English-lexifier pidgins and creoles.

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⁷ Feature 58. *for* PRON NP (genitive) was marginal in Hawaii Pidgin Creole (see Baker and Huber 2001: 198).

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